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Wild Me. The Great State of Maine White Water Canoeing

Maine Department of Economic Development

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Safety First

The companion Vacation Planner #4, Canoeing Flat Water, contains brief but valuable planning information, for which there was not enough space in this folder: GENERAL INFORMATION about canoeing in Maine; CAMPING & FIRE regulations; AIRPLANE SERVICE to canoeing waters; CANOE RENTAL; GUIDE SERVICE; PERSONAL PREPARATION; MAPS; TRIP INFORMATION; EQUIPMENT and CHECK LIST suggestions.

In addition to that folder's information about ACCESS, if your approach would cross the Canada-U.S. border using a private road you should check with the company whose road you plan to use, requesting permit to use their road and inquiring what Port Director of U.S. Customs you need to contact regarding entry. Some small stations are unmanned at certain times, which could cause delay to those unaware of the required procedure.

We realize that some white-water enthusiasts are the dare-devil sort, gaining joy from meeting the challenge of danger. Maine has waterways equal to your daring--but please heed the safety code of the American White Water Affiliation (see A.M.C. New England Canoeing Guide) and where a river section calls for a team of experts, we urge you to tackle it only with such a team and with adequate supportive and rescue precautions. And for all quick water canoeing be sure to find out all you can about waterway characteristics, hazards, and current conditions. We want you to be able to come back for more. How pathetic and useless is a drowned canoeing expert!

PUBLICATIONS AND INFORMATION SOURCES

Publications Mentioned in This Folder:

A.M.C. New England Canoeing Guide, \$5; A.M.C. Manual of White Water; Appalachian Mountain Club, 5 Joy St., Boston, Mass. 02108

Forest Campsites - Maine Forest Service
State Office Building, Augusta, Maine 04330

USGS Topographic Maps - U.S. Geological Survey,
1200 So. Eads St., Arlington, Virginia 22202

Family Camping in Maine - Maine Cooperative
Camping Association
available from Maine Publicity Bureau

Other Information and Publications about Maine:

Maine Department of Economic Development
State Office Building, Augusta, Maine 04330

Maine Publicity Bureau
78 Gateway Circle, Portland, Maine 04102

State of Maine Information Center
48 Rockefeller Plaza, New York City, N. Y. 10020

State of Maine Information Center
Laurentien Hotel, Dominion, Montreal, Canada

Other Information Centers:

Jct. of U.S. Rt. 1 & Me. Turnpike, Kittery, Maine
Bass Park, Bangor, Maine

U.S. Rt. 302, Fryeburg, Maine (summer only)
Me. Turnpike, No., Cumberland, Maine (summer only)

Internat'l Bridge, Calais, Maine (summer only)
All Local Chamber of Commerce Offices

Thrills for all

Probably some who read this are experienced white water enthusiasts; others are just beginning to experiment with quick water canoeing -- or perhaps only dreaming of the thrills -- and spills.

Maine has water suited for all: easy-going rips in which to practice the use of a setting-pole; fast moving streams for a lively test of maneuvering; longer runs for intermediate skills with both paddle and pole; pitches where you'll want to know how to lower the canoe by line; famous long, rugged camping-canoe trips through wilderness woodlands, to try the ability and endurance of well-experienced canoeists; and white-water that should be tackled only by teams of experts with careful preparation and scouting.

Fast water is not only exciting--it's powerful. Unfortunately, too many canoeists, enthused with the prospect of white-water thrills, overestimate their skills and strength, or underestimate the power of the water -- and their trip ends with a needless disaster. We want you to enjoy your trip, so please judge your capability frankly, and go prepared with proper equipment, and with information, maps, guidance, and safety procedures.

THIS VACATION PLANNER

is a brief summary for those interested in canoeing some of the more lively Maine streams with stretches of rapids -- including white-water. Another Vacation Planner, #4, Canoeing Flat Water, deals similarly with the more quiet waters, but contains more general information about canoeing in Maine.

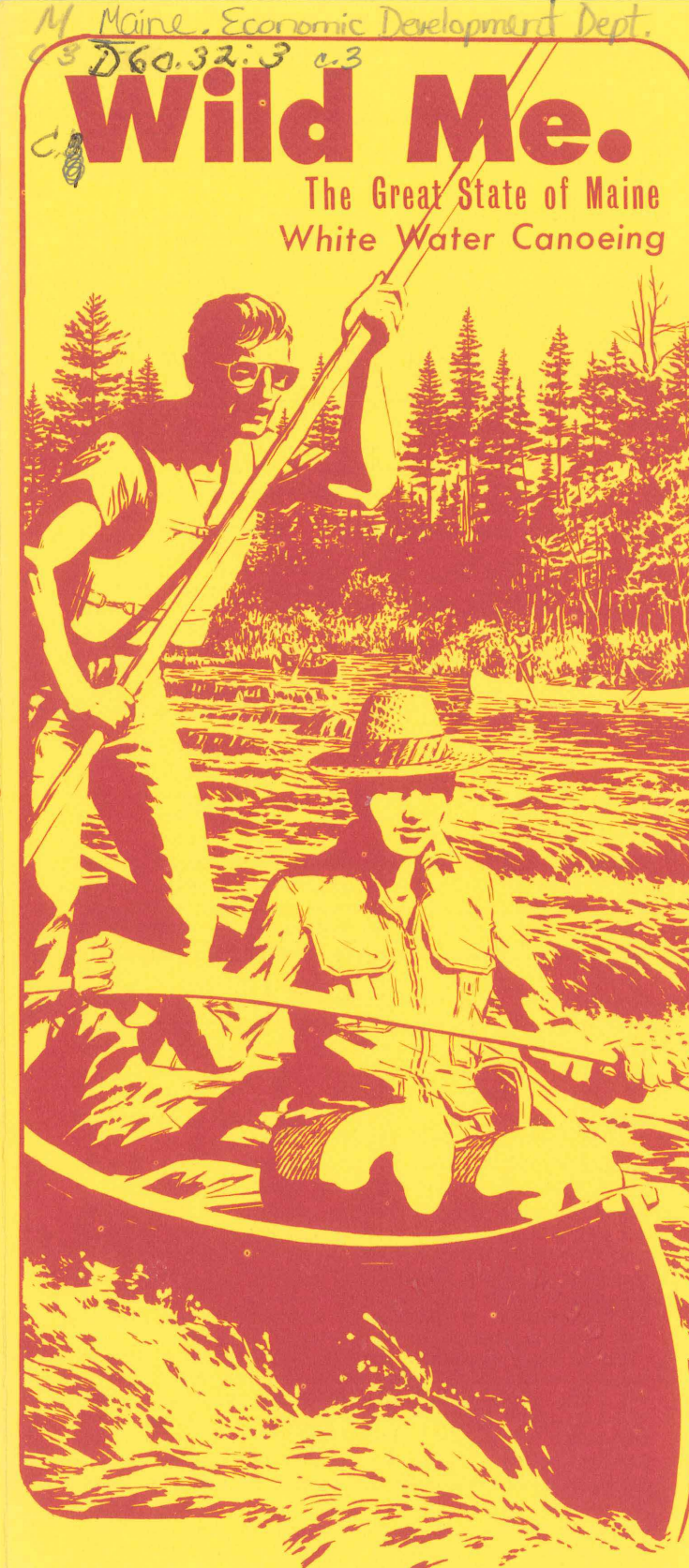
One in a series of Vacation Planners programmed by the Maine Department of Economic Development, available from 78 Gateway Circle, Portland, Maine 04102. Prospective visitors to Maine are interested in the "facts", and these brochures are designed with this in mind. We would appreciate receiving your comments.

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VACATION PLANNER 3/

TRIP INFORMATION given here is only to acquaint you with some of the better canoe trips available in Maine, but an actual trip requires much more information. We recommend the "A.M.C. New England Canoeing Guide" for information about specific trips; and, if possible, talk with people who have made the trip; then, because streams are changeable, before your voyage check locally about water conditions, obstructions, and hazards.

Abbreviations and symbols to provide brief information:

(*) : part of trip, experts only; *: experts only; **: team of experts. /G/: a guide is advisable; /G*/: we strongly urge guide service. R: River, L: Lake, P: Pond, S: Stream; ✓: check carefully before canoeing; ptg: portage(s) or carry, preceded by number of portages.

Camping: Δ Forestry Campsites, ♠ State Parks, Δ Commercial Campgrounds, Δ Other Camping, Δ* Permits required.

Average description of water and environment: (1) smooth; (2) mostly smooth; (3) mixed smooth and rapids; (4) continuous rapids; (a) attractive, scenic; (b) pleasant; (c) mediocre; (h) canoe during high water. These may be combined, e.g. (2a), meaning mostly smooth with scenic attractions.

Difficulty ratings (using the International River Classification --see A.M.C. Canoeing Guide):

Rating	Approximate Difficulty	Skill Required
(class I)	Easy	Practiced Beginner
(class II)	Requires Care	Intermediate
(class III)	Difficult	Well-Experienced
(class IV)	Very Difficult	Highly Skilled (several years with organized group)

(class V)	Exceedingly Difficult	Team of Experts
(class VI)	Utmost Difficulty (near navigable limit)	Team of Experts with all safety precautions

Note: we do not have these ratings for all the waterways listed. Inquire further before running streams.

***Little Ossipee R:** to Saco R. 31 mi, (4ah); some sections *strong experienced groups only. Early--by end of April. One of best in Southern Maine.

Ossipee L. & R.: some rapids dangerous in high water, impassable in low. To Saco R, (3a); 17 mi; 2-5 ptg. Spring.

Little Androscoggin: above W. Paris to S. Paris, 12 mi; (3b); 1-2ptg; ✓ rapids at Snow's Falls; polluted below S. Paris; Spring.

Nezinscot branches: W. Sumner & E. Sumner to Buckfield, Spring.

7 Mile S: E. Dixfield to Androscoggin R, 8 mi. Spring.

***Swift R:** below gorge at Byron to Mexico, 13 mi; (4bh); 1 ptg, plus several sharp drops, (class I-II); medium water only.

Sunday R: the pool to Androscoggin R, 6 mi; (4ah); from 2½ mi. above covered bridge. Spring.

Lower Magalloway R: /G/ Aziscohos Dam to Umbagog L. and Androscoggin R; (class IV-III) first 2 mi.

***Wild R:** Hastings to Gilead, 2½ mi; (4ah); experts only at right water level only; usually late spring; scout carefully.

***Rapid R:** Lower Richardson to Umbagog L, 6 mi; (class III-V); not recommended except in low water; only a strong group of experts should attempt. ✓ Union Water Power Co. about flow.

***Kennebec R:** Carry Brook Eddy, to the Forks, 9 mi. continuous (class II-III) rapids; Warning: water level fluctuates quickly from shallow to dangerous; ✓ Harris Generating Station; Δ*. Forks to Caratunk, 9 mi. continuous (class I).

**Some expert groups may wish to tackle E. Outlet of Moosehead L. or the rapids below the dam at Indian P., BUT ... the Outlet should be run only with thorough knowledge and checking about pulp logs and flow rate (✓ Kennebec Water Power Co., Waterville). Below Indian P. --don't do it! River enters gorge, becomes impassable with no way out.

China L. & S.: to Sebasticook R. near Kennebec R; a few rapids in stream; 3-4 carries.

***Sandy R:** Phillips to Strong, 9 mi; rapids to (class III), difficult, fierce; 5-7ptg; weekdays are better because of dam control of water. Med-water only; for experts or well-experienced. S. to Farmington (2a).

Temple S. to W. Farmington, 8 mi; (3b); 2ptg; Spring.

Carrabassett R: Carrabassett to E. New Portland, 23 mi; (4ah); (class II-III) in med. water; impassable spots in high water; out above E. New Portland. ✓ short, difficult pitches around boulders and ledges; early May.

Wilson S: Start below falls, 1½ mi. below Wilton, to Farmington Falls & Sandy R, 15 mi; (3a-4a); 2-3 ptg.

***Dead R:** /G/ Long Falls Dam to Forks, 22 mi; ▲ Δ*; 2 days; (4a); 1ptg at Grand Falls. Contains longest stretch of continuous heavy rapids in New England from Spencer S. to the Forks (class IV). In high water, hard run even for experts, dangerous.

***Spencer S:** /G/ Baker Pond to Dead R, 16 mi, (4a); 8 mi. to Spencer Dam; 5 mi. continuous rapids to Spencer Gut, dangerous (½ mi. ptg), with rapids continuing to Dead R.

Spencer L. & Little Spencer S: /G/ 8 mi; ▲; 3 mi. shallow rapids to (class III).

(*)**Dead R. So. Branch:** Rt#16 at Dallas to Flagstaff L, 19 mi; ▲; first 3 mi. for experts only if water level is right, (class IV); 2 lifts; rest of way partly smooth with 3 mi. sections continuous (class II-III); Spring.

(*)**Moose R:** Δ* ▲; One of best canoe-camping trips, with variety of choices: /G/ Skinner to Holeb, 12 mi; (4ah); /G/ Holeb to Jackman, 30 mi; (2a); ✓ with Ranger about falls; 2ptg; /G*/ Jackman to Moosehead L, 31 mi; smooth thru Long P, 16 mi; 2½ mi. rapids (class I); out here; experts may ptg dam & bridge; 2½ mi. rapids *(class III-IV); 7 mi. Brassua L. to dam; 3 mi. to Moosehead L.

Nicatus L. & S: to Passadumkeag R, 16 mi; ▲ Δ*; (3a); 3 rapids (1 sharp).

Macwahoc S: Macwahoc L. to Molunkus S. (at Macwahoc), 26 mi; (3ah); some steep rapids.

Wytopitlock S: (L. to Mattawamkeag R.), 18 mi; (3ah), with (4a) stretches, some steep.

Baskahegan S: Carrol to Baskahegan L, 12 mi; (2ah); med. high water only; 3 rips, 1 sharp; Baskahegan L. & S. to Mattawamkeag R, 24 mi; (2a); 1-3ptg, (1 dam, 2 rapids).

Piscataquis R: Blanchard to Guilford, 13 mi; (4a) for first 8 mi; Guilford to Howland, 47 mi, mostly (1a-2a), but one 6 mi. stretch (4a) with 1 mi. heavy rapids ✓, steep banks.

Pleasant R: Katahdin Iron Works to Brownville, 13 mi; (4ah), steep, declining to smooth (2a) last 6 mi. to dam at Brownville.

(*)**Penobscot W. Branch:** /G/; (can be traveled from Seboomok L. to Ripogenus Dam, 59 mi, or even from the N. or S. Branch, i.e. from Big Bog or from Canada Falls L.) ▲; Usual start: Big Eddy, 2 mi. below Ripogenus Dam to Norcross, 30 mi; (3a), with stretches of heavy rapids (to class IV), and spots dangerous even for experts; 3-7 ptg. Side trips: up Debscaneag Lakes; (2a); 3-4 ptg; and/or Nahin-akanta L.&S, (4ah); to Pemadumcook L; Pemadumcook to Jo-Mary L; 3 ptg. Togue P.&S, Sandy S, Millinocket L.&S, Shad P, Penobscot W. Branch, 23 mi; (3a-1a).

***Penobscot E. Branch:** /G*/ Telos L. to Grand L. Matagamon Dam, 24 mi; ▲; (4ah-3a), with a 9 mi. stretch of rapids (class IV), with 2ptg. For experts, with ideal water. Run early, by mid-June. Usual start: Grand L. Dam to Grindstone, /G*/, 40 mi; ▲. Not much opportunity for shooting rapids, but is a trip only for well-seasoned canoeists. Most drops are impassable, easy between, but heavy current can pull canoe into falls; 4-8ptg; some (class III-IV); for experts only, with favorable water. Attempt Whetstone Falls and below only under favorable conditions.

(*)**Seboeis R:** (alternate start for E. Branch trip; easier, less hazardous) *Snowshoe L. to Grand L. Road, 11 mi, experts only; to (class IV); 1 ptg; difficult. Usual start: Grand L. Rd. to E. Branch Penobscot, 17 mi; to (class II), 1ptg, with (4a) (class I); ▲.

Crooked R: Songo P. (Rt#5 below Bethel) to N. Waterford, 10 mi; (3ah); to Bolster's Mills, 25 mi; 1 mi. steep rapids, then (2a) and (3a), some sharp rapids for 1¼ mi, and some ½ mi. stretches hard and intermediate; 2-3ptg at impassable drops; to Songo R, 22 mi, easier; 1 rapid; 2ptg; to Sebago L; ▲.

Narraguagus R: Deer L. to Deblois, 23 mi; (3ah), to (class III); Deblois to Cherryfield, 15 mi; (3a); 2ptg; 8 mi. stretch (class I); another (class I) which needs scouting, maybe ptg; out before town to avoid dams; ▲; May, June, or after heavy rains.

(*)**St. John R:** /G*/ from Baker L. to Ft. Kent, 142 mi; ▲; 2-3 weeks; usually by mid-June or shortly after, but not before June. (tributaries can be canoed earlier). (Possible to keep canoe in all the way if you can handle very heavy rapids); via S.W. Branch at Canadian border, 137 mi; via N.W. Branch at Canadian border, 134 mi; Ft. Kent to St. John, N.B. is another 263 mi; Baker L. to St. John, N.B. is 405 mi. of canoeing with only 1ptg (Grand Falls) for those with the skill, stamina, and time. Traditional approach from N.E. Carry adds nearly 60 mi. to trip, and many difficulties. From N.W. Branch to Allagash, 79 mi, with no egress but downstream, with some heavy and dangerous rapids; rugged even with a guide (be in excellent condition for this trip).

(*)**Aroostook R:** Fly in to Chase, Millimagasset, or Millinocket L; Chase L. & Munsungan S. to Aroostook R, /G/, 16 mi; 1 ptg (Munsungan Falls) can be run by experts, but has blind drop; 8½ mi; (4a); (class I, II); very pleasant. Millinocket L. & S. to Aroostook R, 6 mi; (3a); first couple of mi. are rough to outlet of Millimagasset L. This lake is pretty--a good alternate start or side trip; (1a).

Mooseleuk L. & S: to Aroostook R, 16 mi; ▲; (4ah), (class I), with one steep drop, sharp bends.

Machias R: (Aroostook County): Big Machias L. to Aroostook R, 32 mi; 1-2 days; ▲; mountainous, heavily forested; 2 ptg; (4a) stretches, some fairly difficult.

Allagash Wilderness Waterway: ▲; both flat-water & rapids; for details and regulations see separate folder; administered by State Park & Recreation Commission.

Musquacook L's & S: /G/ to Allagash R, 18 mi; ▲; 11-12 mi. rapids; some must be lined (see folder on Allagash).

Fish R: /G/ From source to portage, 24 mi; (2ah); ▲; (Fly in, or private road); wild country; Portage L to Eagle L, 24 mi; (1a); to St. John R, 20 mi; (2a); with 5 mi, (3a), a few sharp drops can be run in high water; 1ptg around Fish R. Falls.

St. Francis R: Beau Lake to St. John R, 22 mi; combines lake, rapids, fast water; 1 ptg or (class III) rapid (can be dangerous), and some sharp drops.

Little Black R: /G*/ to St. John R, 27 mi; ▲; (3a), mostly fast water with 2 rapids ✓; (private road access); 1ptg. maybe, ✓.

Big Black R: /G*/ (Canadian crossing and private road access, or from Rt#24 in Quebec) Rt#24 to St. John R, 30 mi; ▲; stretches of quick-water, (4a), some very rough.

Depot S: /G*/ (Canadian crossing and private road access) Depot Mtn. to Big Black R, 10 mi; fast water; 2 mi. rapids.

(*)**Sheepscot R:** Montville to W. Branch, 18 mi; (3ah), with sharp drops, line or carry; 1-3ptg. *Below Sheepscot P, for experts with favorable water. W. Branch: Palermo to Sheepscot R, (3ah); 2 steep rapids; 1-3ptg. Coopers Mills to Wiscasset, 27 mi, mostly smooth, but some very fast water; 2-3 rapids; 1ptg; tide effects.

***Machias R:** /G/ 3rd Machias L. to Whitneyville, 51 mi; experienced white-water canoeists only; 3-6 days; (✓ St. Regis Paper Co. at Whitneyville about logs and pulp drives). Usual approach: ptg from Grand L, or by road to 3rd Machias L. The real white-water begins below 3rd Machias L, with (class III-IV) sections ✓; ▲ Δ*; 5-8 ptg.

Old S: /G/ (alternate, easier start for Machias R. trips); to Machias R, 17 mi; 2-3 ptg, or line.

E. Machias R: /G/ Pocamoonshine L. to E. Machias, 43 mi, much of it through wilderness; (3ah); 1 dam; several short rapids; not as difficult as the Machias R; run early.

(*)**St. Croix R:** /G/ Vanceboro to Kellyland, 33 mi; mainly rapids, only for well-experienced; to (class IV); ▲; 3ptg (falls, dams); to Calais, 20 mi; (tidal below Calais). 3ptg (falls, dams) to (class IV); ✓ logs to Woodland & below Woodland.

Grand Lakes Chain: connecting carries to: Passadumkeag & Penobscot Rivers; Machias R. trip; and St. Croix R.

Orange R: Rocky L. to Whiting, 11 mi; (2b); 1 dam; 1 drop (maybe ptg), and ½ mi. rapids. To Whiting Bay, 3 mi; connects with Dennys Bay; fairly protected tidal section.

Dennys R: Meddybemps L. outlet to Dennysville, 17 mi; (3a); 4ptg (3 dams, 1 steep drop); several rips and short rapids.